

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



IN THE BROKER'S BEST PARLOUR.

DAVID LLOYD'S LAST WILL.

CHAPTER XXI.—HARDER THAN GOLD.

MARK traversed the dark streets with the deepest sense of depression he had ever suffered. The death of Mrs. Lloyd, and the distress and ruin that had come so unexpectedly upon Barry and her family, tried his heart to the very core. There was still before him a very painful interview with Mr. Lloyd, to whom he had to communicate the news of his loss. Mark's sentiments for Mr. Lloyd were of a conflicting

nature. He could not, as a Christian, yield to dislike or contempt of any fellow-creature; and for Mr. Lloyd he entertained a regretful compassion, born of the ardent love he had felt for his wife and daughter. But for that sudden death ten years ago, he would be standing towards him in the position of a father-in-law, and Mark was apt to cling to all kinds of relationships which brought him closer to any human heart. Yet his new love for Barry, added to his keen sense of wrong, was spurring him on to a most indignant wrath against the miser, whose love of

money had driven him into so dishonest and cruel an act. There was still a little doubt in his mind whether Mr. Christopher Lloyd had not received some money from his brother, at the time of the bill of sale transaction, for Mr. Christopher had never accustomed himself to any self-denial or prudence. Yet to crush the family now, his own family too, and with such a girl as Barry in it, seemed an almost incredible act of oppression. Mark could not shake off his depression; and the streets, with here and there a shivering, half-clad figure skulking away from the light of the lamps, appeared a place of doleful shades, a den of miseries and crimes.

The house of the broker in London Road was gained, and Mark was ushered up-stairs to a small, dingy and crowded room, where Mr. Lloyd was still sitting up, afraid of going to bed and to sleep in a strange house. He was in a miserable mood too, though he had his notes safely clasped in his pocket-book, and that buttoned into his breast-pocket. Barry's strong and plain language had entered the old man's seared conscience, and was still quivering and rankling there. He was pondering abjectly upon the inevitable hour when he must leave his treasured wealth, and go away into some dim region, where gold was of no worth. He had some vague, ill-defined hopes that his wife's prayers and meditations, added to his own early professions of religion, might go so far as to keep him from eternal loss and ruin; but even if he gained admittance into the heaven which she contemplated, it would be but a bare and loveless place apart from his riches; unless, indeed, he could make the Lord his debtor, and get that loan repaid to him in the courts above! With these dim and melancholy notions, which formed themselves into no clear thoughts in his brain, there mingled a very distinct dread of the strangers who surrounded him. He remembered with what suspicious readiness the broker, who knew how much money he had about him, had offered him a room and bed at his house, when he had taken offence against his brother; and now he felt himself a forlorn and helpless old man at the mercy of these unknown people. The small imagination he had left was strong enough to conjure up some terrible pictures of robbery, and even murder; and Mr. Lloyd was in a very miserable mood indeed.

When, therefore, Mark entered the room a few minutes before midnight, the thin, trembling old man hastened towards him, and grasped him with his withered and claw-like hands, welcoming him with an earnestness that could not be mistaken. A feeling of profound and unutterable compassion filled Mark's heart, as he contrasted his own strong and vigorous manhood with the feebleness of this stunted and decrepit being, who had sunk so low in years, and in one of the meanest of all human vices. As he looked down upon him, trembling, weeping and doting, he wondered why so poor a creature should hold so much power in his hands. But he was one of God's creatures; a fellow-creature, and Mark suffered no shade of contempt to abide in his contemplation of Mr. Lloyd.

"I'm so glad you are come, Mark," he sobbed, with drivelling tears, "I've a deal of money about me, and this is a den of thieves. I was afraid of going to an inn, but this is worse. And Barry is such a termagant, I dare not go back to my brother's. Her eyes looked as if they would strike me dead on the spot, and she said such dreadful words. I shall not

forget them, I can promise her; never! No, no, no, Barry Lloyd."

His small reddened eyes grew dry again as he spoke, but he did not release Mark from his hold, and even kept his hand upon his arm, when they were sitting together on the hearth.

"Mr. Lloyd," said Mark, "I have several things to say to you to-night. First of all, I left your house at six o'clock only, this evening."

Mark paused as if to wait for some inquiry which would lead to the communication he had to make, but Mr. Lloyd looked vacantly at him, and fumbled at his breast-pocket.

"Well, well," he said, as Mark continued silent, "I'm surprised you could stay so long in such a quiet spot. I wonder how Nanny managed to keep you all."

"Mrs. Lloyd was ill when you left her," observed Mark.

"Ailing a little," answered Mr. Lloyd, "and hankering after a doctor, as all women do; they've no thought of the expense of a doctor's bill. I suppose," and an anxious expression crossed his furrowed face, "I suppose you have not called in a doctor to see her?"

"Yes," said Mark, "I saw how ill she was; but he could do little for her. She objected strongly to my sending for you to return home."

It was of no use for Mark to try to suggest the truth to the dull and callous mind of the miser. He shook his head with an air of dissatisfaction, and he was about to reach out his pocket-book in order to place his money in Mark's sure keeping, for he reposed implicit faith in him.

"Mr. Lloyd," said Mark, plainly, "your wife is dead."

He turned from the old man as he spoke, not wishing to see his face as the few harsh, hard words conveyed to him the bare truth, so far as this life only was concerned. Mr. Lloyd shivered a little, for he had been thinking of death, not knowing how near home its stroke had fallen. If she was dead, who was four years younger than he, his own turn might not be very far distant.

"Dead!" he echoed, "dead!" And then he was silent for some minutes. "Do you know, Mark, if she had made any will?" he added, anxiously.

It had been his chief solicitude since his daughter's death, for, by her settlement, unless she bequeathed her property to some chosen heir, it would return to the family she had left to become his wife. It had always been a difficult subject to approach with her, for she had steadily declined making her will until she felt her life approaching the close, maintaining that she would have due time given her for all needful preparation. Mr. Lloyd awaited Mark's answer with gnawing anxiety.

"Yes," answered Mark, briefly, "she has left her property to you."

"She was a good wife," he said, "a good wife. We will give her a good burial. You shall order it yourself, Mark; a suitable sort of funeral, you know. We must do it comfortably for her. She was a good wife to me."

There was something so ghastly in this tribute to his wife's virtues, that Mark turned and gazed curiously into the face of the widowed husband. He had assumed an air of respectable grief, but the doting tears he was weeping for himself when Mark arrived were dry now, and he was looking far less

forlorn and wretched. He had lost a wife, but he had gained two thousand pounds.

"Now," said Mark, "I must talk about your brother. You are doing him a wrong which will make your own death-bed wretched. I am going to speak very plainly to you. If it be all true that has been told me, it is the most rascally thing I ever heard of. If your brother has had no money from you, it is one of the most scandalous robberies that was ever committed."

If Mark had wished to drive farther into the miser's conscience those arrows of Barry's which were still quivering there, he could not with a month's study have chosen more suitable language. But Mr. Lloyd could bear it from Mark, though it made him writhe uneasily, for he wished to stand well with him.

"My dear Mark," he said, remonstratingly, "I've done it all for the best. They ought not to live in the extravagance they are accustomed to, now they have no money; and Christopher would have sold his things recklessly, and at a great disadvantage. When they've spent what they've got, you know they will come upon me, and then there will be this money to maintain them, till things come round a bit. I offered Barry ten pounds of it, and she tossed it back to me. I shall not forget her behaviour, I can tell you."

"Then you thought it best," said Mark, patiently striving to follow the intricacies of Mr. Lloyd's distorted mind, "as you had the power to sell your brother's goods, to do so at once, and keep the money to assist him, after you have forced him into a less expensive mode of living. Is that it?"

"Exactly," answered Mr. Lloyd; "you understand it precisely, my boy. Christopher always was a fool and a spendthrift. I will give you ten pounds at once, if you like, and you can let them have it a little at a time as they need it. If you like, Mark."

Mark did not hesitate a moment in taking the note from the reluctant hand of Mr. Lloyd, who followed it with hungry eyes, and sighed bitterly as it vanished from his sight in Mark's pocket-book.

"Still," persisted Mark, "it is a wrong thing, and you will repent of it when you come to die. You must refund the whole of the money to your brother at once. It is the only way of repairing the mischief you have done."

"No, no!" said Mr. Lloyd, "you don't know the condition he is in; he is not fit to be trusted with money. I couldn't do it, Mark. It would kill me to do it. Leave the money in my hands, and let them apply for it as they want it. They owe me a year's rent now. No, no, I can't and won't give up the money in a lump."

There was such dogged resolution in his manner that Mark felt it would be hopeless at that time to urge his request. But once more looking down at the covetous old man, in his mean and miserable bondage, his heart was filled again with a rush of divine compassion.

"Oh!" he cried, "if you only knew, at least now in your old age, what it is you are casting from you! what everlasting riches you are losing! The money you have hoarded clogs your soul like thick clay, and you can neither see nor understand the true wealth you are forfeiting. Listen to me this once. I promised your wife never to give you up, never to forsake you, while either of us should live. Listen to these words."

Mark fastened his eyes upon the hard features before him to catch some token of life stirring in the almost dead soul, and his heart failed at the rigid and stony gaze which met his own. His voice, also, nearly failed, through excess of earnestness; but after an effort he spoke clearly and authoritatively.

"They are not my own words," he said; "God give you grace to listen to them: 'Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure against the last day.'

Mr. Lloyd listened with decorous but unmoved attention; and as Mark ceased to speak, a church clock within hearing struck the hour of twelve, reminding him to test the accuracy of Trevor's watch. It was correct, and with a smile of self-gratulation, he returned it to his pocket.

"Very true, Mark, very true, and very solemn," he said, "ay! I was as religious as you at your age, and I hope the Almighty will not forget it. But I intend making the best of both worlds, I promise you. I'm not forgetful of my latter end, and there'll be neither gold nor silver to rise up in judgment against me at the last day. Poor wife! poor wife! she never quite understood me, but she will know me better by-and-by."

Mark knew it as a fact that Mrs. Lloyd never had understood him, having always supposed him a poor man, struggling under difficulties, and giving, as she believed, a tenth of his income to the poor, according to a contract they had made with one another at the time of their marriage. The depression that Mark had suffered increased a hundred-fold. He felt a profound gloom in this old man's presence, impervious to every bright ray which could gild the future. This heavy and sordid soul, which was to be specially his care, was a leaden weight upon his hopefulness, and crushed down the charity which longed to hope all things. He could scarcely breathe, and yet a great cry of bitterness was upon his lips. What could he do? How could he rouse the sunken spirit to life?

"You shall have the ordering of her funeral yourself," said Mr. Lloyd, with a repulsive air of liberality. "Come down with me to-morrow. And, Mark, write me a receipt for this money, and take it away with you. I will deposit it in the bank in the morning before we start. Good night. So my poor wife is gone at last."

The last sentence was spoken as he stood lighting Mark down the narrow staircase. His face was more cheerful, and his hand did not tremble, though it was stretched out at full length with the candlestick in it. Mark looked back, and up to him, and Mr. Lloyd nodded almost gaily as he once more said "Good night." But when Mark stood alone in the dark streets again, a heavy sob broke from his lips, and tears, which the night hid, fell from the eyes that had remained undimmed beside the deathbed of the miser's wife.

CHAPTER XXII.—CLOUGH'S DISCOVERY.

For the two or three hours which elapsed before it was time for Clough to begin his night's watch in the house where Mr. Lloyd's wife was lying dead, he and the old mole-catcher talked together over the

fire about the hidden hoards of gold supposed to be scattered up and down in it. Throughout the neighbourhood Mr. Lloyd had long borne the character of a miser, and the popular fancy had invested him with all miserly and sordid habits. He was represented as accumulating countless numbers of coins, and secreting them in all the odd holes and corners of the rambling old mansion, after the time-honoured fashion of his fraternity. According to old Trevor, not a plank could creak in Clunbury Heath House without hinting at some treasure to be found underneath it; not a cracked piece of crockery could adorn Nanny's chimney-piece that was not stuffed with bank-notes, hidden amidst rags. All the traditions of avarice had gathered about Mr. Lloyd and his dwelling, and Clough listened to them with an absorbed interest and belief.

Clough's mind was just then in a morbid condition, peculiarly fitted to drink in these stories of untold wealth. Until the famine had fallen upon the cotton districts, he had earned money easily and spent it freely, never looking twice at a shilling, though it might be the last of his week's wages. It was the custom of his class, to very many of which money had no value beyond being the medium of the gratification of their present desires. But since he had been in straits—starved with cold and bitten by hunger—from the sheer want of money, and especially since he had seen his wife and his new-born child perish of starvation, money had gained an exaggerated value in his eyes. He longed for the sight merely of a piece of gold, and the smooth feel of it between his fingers. He felt that he could enter into the miser's love of it; he could understand the joy of having hoards of it about him, unseen by any eye, but within reach of his own hand. If he had only possessed a hidden bag of gold in his ruined home, the famine could not have stricken him so sorely. With his elbow resting on his dictionary, and his chin upon his hand, he went into a long and painful calculation of the money he might have amassed in those good times, which seemed to be gone for ever.

When night came, he repaired to Mr. Lloyd's house, his mind full of these thoughts. A better fire than ordinary was burning in the kitchen grate, and Nanny had a neighbour sitting with her, but there were none of those small festivities going on which are usual upon such occasions. Both Nanny and her friend were exceedingly silent, but they hailed Clough's arrival with some heartiness, giving him the best seat at the fire, which he took as a man's birthright, and made himself at once at home by opening his dictionary, and reading therein to himself.

"Is it the Bible?" asked the neighbour, misled, as Mark had been, by its size and cover.

"No," answered Nanny, "it's a book that he calls a dixionary."

"Oh!" said the neighbour, relapsing into silence, with the dull incuriousness of a country woman. Once or twice Nanny rose, and stole on tip-toe to the foot of the staircase, listening as though there might be some movement in the floor above. It was still early, though quite dark, and when, in the dead stillness, they heard the distant church clock strike eight, Nanny could bear her nameless fears no longer.

"I canna' bear her being without a light all night," she said. "I never heard tell of a corpse lying in the dark, and there are no candles in the

house. Mr. Clough, if you didn't mind being left alone for an hour or two, Mrs. More and me'll go down to the village and buy two or three candles to burn in the poor missis's room. I should never sleep a wink for thinking of it."

"Mind!" said Clough, indignantly, "what is there to mind about? Go thy ways, lass, and welcome. Yo'll find me a' reet when yo' come whoam."

In a few minutes the two women were gone, and he was left alone. He sat for a while gazing steadily into the red embers of the fire, which had burned away in a brisk flame and then sunk into a dull glow, that scarcely lighted the room farther than where he sat. His thoughts were brooding over the stories old Trevor had told him of the hidden treasures, which might at that moment be beneath his feet, or within a stride of his chair. If he could only feast his eyes with a sight of them, and run his fingers through a chinking heap of gold! He was no thief; his blood would have boiled in swift wrath against himself if the bare thought of stealing one of the coins had entered his mind. But he longed, with a strange longing, to see again the golden glitter of the money which would have saved his wife and child from death by famine. He would see it, if he could only find it: and he started to his feet in the impulse of that resolution, and looked round into the deep shadows behind him.

The shadows behind him were so black and profound that a creeping sensation of terror at the gloom seized upon him; but in another moment his mind caught at it as a reason why he should no longer sit there in the darkness. To cross the yard, and borrow a candle from the mole-catcher upon plea of finding it lonesome to sit in the dark, was the work of two or three minutes only, and then Clough came back to the empty house.

But he did not sit down by the kitchen fire again. His sagacity told him it would be useless to begin his search there; so he secured the outer door, and stepped softly down the long passage, as if fearful of being overheard. His small candle cast but a dim, uncertain light into the spacious and empty rooms, upon the thresholds of which he hesitated, wondering whether the cracked and worm-eaten panels were merely wainscoting, or were cupboards stowed with wealth. The number and size of the apartments baffled him, and made his search more difficult. But no room below, he argued, was so likely to be the favoured haunt and treasury of the miser as his own chamber up-stairs; and Clough, with a dogged courage and perseverance, mounted the creaking staircase, pausing upon every step as his foot sprung the loose planks. He opened the first door he came to, passed through, and closed it softly after him. There came a vague, undefined horror upon his spirit when he saw, as soon as the flickering of the candle ceased, that he had intruded into the presence of the dead. The sheet which had been laid above the corpse had fallen round it so as to display the outline of the motionless figure, with the face uplifted, in no posture of repose, but in the attitude of death. Clough stood for a moment paralysed, but as the panic wore away, he was turning to leave the room, when his eye was caught by a wide, old-fashioned grate, with Dutch tiles about it, and a panelled wall above its tall mantel-shelf. In spite of the presence of the dead woman, who might have seemed to him to be jealously watching her husband's treasures, he trod gently across the floor,

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and knelt down to examine the grate and the chimney carefully.

But though he searched carefully, there was nothing to be found. The damp, sooty breath of the chimney came upon his face like the air from some opened vault; and his candle just missed being blown out by it. The Dutch tiles were loose, and ready to fall from the plaster in which they were embedded; but there was nothing at the back of them. His hunger for the sight of gold, as well as his curiosity, seemed likely to be baulked. He retreated a step or two, and looked eagerly up and down the panelled walls, and the high mantel-shelf, until his wandering eyes rested upon a fine, short thread, brown like the oak wainscot, which hung but a little way below the ceiling. He could reach it easily; and as he pulled it, a small panel opened, and revealed a little recess within.

It was all true then! Clough swept his trembling hand round the cupboard, and with his tingling fingers drew out a brown bag of money. He set down his candle upon the empty table, which had been cleared to hold Mrs. Lloyd's grave-clothes, and poured out the contents of the bag in a golden heap, which glistened brightly, even in the poor light of his farthing candle. Mark Fletcher had been wrong. Not all the sagacity of a man of business could destroy entirely the instincts of avarice; for here was the private hoard which the miser kept, forfeiting the interest for the delight of fingering it, counting it, gloating over it. With a pleasure almost equal to the owner's, Clough rolled it under his hand, and let it run between his fingers. He had no thought of taking it, yet he felt a new love for the gold at work within him. At length there stole over him the remembrance of his dead wife—there was nothing singular in that, while the stiff and silent corpse lay there just seen by the corner of his eye—and falling down upon his knees before the gold, a strange passion of mingled sorrow and anger swept across him, shaking his soul to the centre.

When that paroxysm was passed, Clough poured the money back into the bag, tied it up with the string as he had found it, and replaced it in its hiding-place. He had verified the truth of the stories he had heard; he had discovered the miser's secret, and for the time he was satisfied. There might be other hoards about, but this was enough for him at present. He had only wished to find out the fact, perhaps from idle curiosity. He scarcely knew what. He left the room as he had found it, and crept cautiously back to the kitchen; and when the two women returned, they found him apparently engrossed in his dictionary.

The next morning Mark came down with Mr. Lloyd, and took upon himself the ordering of the funeral, to the expenses of which Mr. Lloyd submitted with suppressed and inward anguish. They were the only mourners who followed the coffin to the grave, for Mr. Christopher Lloyd was said to be too ill to attend the funeral.

COUNTRY STROLLS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HARVEST OF A QUIET EYE," "MY STUDY CHAIR," ETC.

NO. III.—A WINDY WALK.

I REMEMBER in the country how I heard the growing wind
Rise in fitful gusts and surges, dying in a booming roar;

And I went and raised the casement, that the fresh breeze,
unconfined,

Might its treasures of refreshment on my heated temples pour.

How the grand old fir-trees tossing with a proud and lordly
grace

Swayed and bended each to other, as the swelling gust passed
by;

And the flying clouds above them held on their fitful race,
And the willow-branches streaming swung out in the wild wind,
And the elms hoarse-booming trembled, and the pines roared
in deep bass,

And the towering poplars rocked, as their leaves flew forth on
high,

As if the flitting sparrows in their flight to leave behind.

Then it passed the trees and left them tossed in graceful
disarray,

And it swooped adown my chimney with a hollow mighty
roar,

Moved the heavy crimson curtains, and then died away once
more;

Died in one long scream of triumph, 'mid the farthest trees
away.

But the vexed trees wildly swaying scarce their fitful arms
composed,

Scarcely changed their wild disorder for a weary bowing rest;
Scarce the tired leaves on the greensward for a moment had
reposed,

Ere, with might and noise from ocean gathered in its hollow
breast,

With the rage of swift Achilles waking from his lethargic stern,
With the shout of Neptune riding on his vast waves to the
shore;

Poising waves, that thundered down to meet the runlets thin
of gore:

In its majesty and glory see the warrior wind return!

Bending all the yellow willows level with the wrinkled waves;
Leaving the oak-hero sinking 'mid his broken mass of leaves.

But the scenery now is London; and I watch the chimney-
pots

Now and then come toppling over, smashing on the pavement
flat,

And the slanting tiles skim downwards, scattering sharp and
random shots

Here and there at some umbrella, or some forward shining
hat.

How the scanty stragglers struggle 'gainst the overpowering
blast,

How it waits to pounce upon them at the corners of the
streets;

Beats them back,—still struggling onward, and victorious at
last;—

Then with howls, and sudden silence, to its hiding-place
retreats.

How it flaps and swells my carpet; how it bellows up the
stairs;

Swoops with musketry of rain-drops, suddenly against the
pane;

And there seems a something desolate, a something that de-
spairs,

In the un-tree-mellowed blankness of its hollow, hoarse
refrain.

I would rather hear its frenzy, playing on a million chords,
Every leafless tree vibrating, as a harp, beneath its hand,
Than to hear it wailing loudly, sobbing lowly, without words,
In the empty charnel stillness of the long, deserted Strand.

I am weary for the country, and I wish the wind were still ;
Closed in warmly with the lamplight, yet I know no trees
around.

In the brave October evenings, or when March the world
unbound,

How I loved to thread the coppice, or to labour up the hill,
In the teeth of all its frenzy, and defiant of its will,
With a heart that stirred exulting at the motion and the
sound !

But this was a fragment sketched in those old days of my London life, when my heart had grown weary and sick for the society of those companions of my solitude, the birds and the trees, and the harvest of the hedgerows. I am a dweller in the country now, and I have but to sally forth on three days out of seven in nearly every week of autumn, winter, or spring, to get wind enough ; though, in these parts, it is true, with fewer trees than I could wish. Over a mile of flat country, without so much as a hedge to stop its fury, the vehement west wind sweeps, often charging me with the million bayonets of the rain. A mile and a half to church on such a day, with hard work to set step before step—well, it is necessary to start a little earlier, and I dare say the general effect is bracing.

I remember, when I lived near Shorncliffe Camp, sincerely pitying many of the brave defenders of our country. Let me see—Don't they harden metal by making it red-hot, and then plunging it into ice-water ? Perhaps the like praiseworthy end of hardening may be in the view of the authorities when a regiment, hot from India, finds itself exposed to—well, some good, thorough *cooling*, on the top of that certainly unmistakably bare and shorn cliff. Soldiers ought to be cheap and easy to get, methinks, considering how careless the country is with what are, in truth, expensive toys. Besides what seems to us outsiders some want of management in cases like that noted above, I must own to a little surprise at the grumbling that there has been of late about the increase to the estimates which accrued from some small attention to the comfort of the soldier. But then I practically know something about the matter, having had forty soldiers with wives and children “not on the strength,” i.e., married without leave, lodging in my parish. They had to solve a curious problem, viz., how to support those expensive luxuries on 4s. 2d. per week, which was all they had in cash, having, moreover, to find out of it 2s. or 2s. 6d. weekly rent for a single room. I own I thought the penny or so a day that was added to their store was not an unjustifiable extravagance on the part of Mrs. Britannia. I should have said ‘tis really an item which would have made glad a heart of stone ! However, one does not always guess right.

But I tread on the edge of a wide subject; that of marriage in the army. Ought soldiers to be married at all, as a general rule ? Well, of course there are difficulties ; and let the State by all means keep its virgins—if it can. In truth, the whole case of a permanent army is an anomaly, and a curse to itself and to its neighbourhood. Only, if the anomaly must exist, philanthropists and fearers of God should put their wits to the question of how, as much as possible, to alleviate its evils. Marriage allowed to all after so many years’ service seems the best rule. And I believe that some regulation of this kind has obtained since the days when I had soldiers for parishioners.

So much for Shorncliffe Camp. If you want a windy walk, merely for the sake of the wind, I have

a friend who will certify you as to the excellent capabilities of that locality. He tried it on one pitch black night, in a tempest of rain, equipped in my waterproofs and an old clerical felt hat. After an invigorating race of some half-mile in chase of this, he preferred curbing its liveliness by carrying it under his arm. His leggings came off, he lost his way, and at last, beaten deaf and blind nearly, he arrived at the door of his lodgings. There the wind finished him off by blowing the waterproof over his head like an extinguisher, and, quite unable to extricate himself, he staggered past the amazed landlady, and sank on the sofa with a groan of exhaustion. So that, you may perceive, our fine fellows get some thorough seasoning up there.

My walk, however, is an inland experience. Turning over memory’s notebook, I find that not a few strolls were taken in company with the invisible friend whom I have chosen to be my comrade about Sutton and Banstead Downs. Let me therefore button-to my light overcoat, rather against wind than any cold, and start briskly forth on this mild March morning to face the strong gentle wind, and to trace the familiar ways that I have trodden so often as boy and youth. It will be pleasant so, for thus shall I not want for companions, warmer and closer than this vagabond and fickle wind, if as impalpable, invisible, spiritual. How pleasant the little points here and there are made to me by the associations which cling to each ! Here, at that finger-post we used to turn, my father and I, when out for a constitutional merely, by a kind of instinct. I have known this requirement of a fixed and definite bound to a walk carried by a friend of mine to the point of a necessity felt to touch a certain rail before wheeling round for his homeward route. Indeed he pressed this so far that, I believe, half in fun and half in earnest, he would even insist on the companions of his walk falling in with the whim. The walk was not finished before the post was touched.

But here, at this waymark, another association awakes. Here, at three miles distance from home, I gave my prized gift, my young (so-called) carrier pigeon, her first flight. The excitement of my brothers, my own important anxiety, the undoing of the basket, the poising the bird for a breathless moment ; ah, how it all comes back ! Then the toss into the air, and the swift rush of the strong dove-wing ; the upward cleaving pinions, the wheel, the circling, ever-rising flight ; the splendid height attained, the dart in the chosen direction at last. It was to home this time, and grown bold, I took her after that to more than twice the distance. After the spiral ascent, the arrow-decision was made ; alas ! in the wrong direction then. Thereupon came the hope, the anxiety, would she return home after a few hours, after a few days wandering ? But she never did. The run up the ladder and into the loft revealed only the empty cot ; nor was the wistful watch of many days repaid. That was really a sorrow to me, then. But now my mind is rather dwelling upon the allegory which it might form. The little nestlings that we brooded over and tended so carefully, so many fast flying years in the cot : parent birds in these cases, and ah, not merely proprietors. And then the day came in which the launch must be made into some free and unconfining sphere. O, the careful anxious hearts, while the soaring, circling flight was watched ! How seldom (though in this case *possible*) the instant decision and the straight speeding towards

the land where home lies. Generally the undecided circling and veering; at last, perhaps, a definite arrow-dart made. Sometimes this is towards the Home-Land; alas, oftener, perhaps, in the wrong direction! Thereupon come the hope, the anxiety. Will they return home after a few weeks', after a few months'—after a few years'—wandering? Shall the wishful watch of many days be at last repaid? Or will snares or guns find out the wanderer? or the tired stray join some decoys of the world's cots, and (though this be to depart from pigeon-language) become itself a citizen of that country which is not Home? Or will some kind famine compel it to take wing again (for the world, after the first decoy, does feed its birds badly): and so, draggled, may be, and torn, but escaped from hawk's swoop, and world-bars, and oh, how welcomed!—shall it at last, by the faithful watchers, be seen sitting one day upon the roof; eyes dim and filmed, feathers ragged and ruffled; a broken, humbled thing for that which sped forth into the clear morping, swift, strong, untiring, a being made to soar; now quite other than that, a bankrupt now, all spent and nothing bought except this broken heart: but even so, and because so, oh, how welcome, and how welcomed! For this is at last in the direction of the Homeward route: and now shall they not together wing their way to the true Home-land?

Therefore cast forth (you must) in faith, O anxious hearts, the long-nurtured inmates of the nest; and despair not of them though their hesitation be long, and their choice wrong at last. Watch for them still, with never-staying prayers: if you early trained them for God, there will be ever a voice behind them which will not let them wander unbesought. And those prayers are addressed to One who hath a potent call, that at last they may not refuse to heed!

How the strong soft wind, resisting me almost like a thing palpable, and not only spirit, gathers its force against me nearly to the compelling me at times to pause. But I press on, past that thin range of sea-sounding firs, and past the hedgerows and cottage patches, and now I am out upon the bare Downs at last.

Nay, not bare: rather a rich harvest of beauty, when you see them carpeted with the golden gorse, here in sheets, here sprinkled about the dark spiny green. Do not fear the inevitable Linnaeus: let us be content to admire without precedent, for this once; as well as the blustering wind will allow us. We must look sideways, as well as we can, keeping our hats at the proper angle for being blown *on*, rather than off: or we may make a stand and hold the rim firmly, and disregard its impotent anger, while we take in the glories of this golden field. And this gorse is always smouldering, even when it has not burst into one wide flame: like the sparks about burnt paper, you shall see its scintillations at all times straying and scattered about the dark flat land. And upon these Downs you shall with more impunity add to your nosegay tufts of the yellow broom; and the pale blue-green juniper sentinels the level here and there; and curls of new bracken are unfolding wherever they can; and, later, the grey hair-bells haunt the bare places; and at the proper time you may find rare specimens here of the orchis tribe.

Then, for birds, besides the dip of the clean chaffinch past us now and then, and now and then the yellow-brown of a lark's chequered wing (silvery underneath like the reverse side of an evergreen-oak

leaf), we have for constant company the busy, noisy little stone-chats, flitting from bush to tuft, but ever choosing the very top of bush or brake for their perch, a handsome little bird, with its black and red, and patches of pure white, and fussy excitement about our presence and observation.

What else to note? Of course smooth delicious down-turf edging the road, and opening into lawns and alleys through the furze thickets. Equally, of course, the square striped patches where the turf has been removed: rolled away in those compact, neat turves, rich brown edged with thin green, that pile up so readily in cannon-ball heaps. The gardeners love the down turf for lawns, and it makes also at times a smooth coverlid for some specially tended plot in God's Acre.

I stray down one of these openings, and come upon the wide pits dug all about the downs, for gravel, I suppose. And I remember the wild hilarity of early days, when, a merry band of four brothers, we used to career over these expanses, and vie with each other in leaps across these miniature chasms. Glorious if the bob of a white tail were to catch our eye, and a startled rabbit scamper past us into the gorse. Slight excitements serve, and cheap pleasures, when life itself is exuberant enough to be of itself nearly sufficient enjoyment.

But as I retrace my steps the vehement wind almost hurries me along with it, in its anxiety to get people home and to have all the world to itself. I am really compelled to postpone my gathering of wayside bits, and hedgerow gleanings, and cloud-scapes: and to concentrate my attention upon the wind. Be it so. I have long had this invisible power marked down for some ingleside or wayside thinkings; let me even give in to its importunity, and let it carry away my mind, if not my body, in its course.

"*Tὸ πνεῦμα. Τῷ* (ruach), used, as *πνεῦμα*, for wind, and also for the Holy Spirit."

It is interesting, and very suggestive for thought more extensive in length and depth than would suit a leisure hour and a country stroll, to note this identity of name, also the analogies actually drawn between these unseen powerful influences in the Word of God, yea, even by the Word of God.

Take this one, which has occurred to myself, though doubtless (what among us men on such a subject can be?) it probably is not new. I put it shortly, and leave thinkers to digest it.

The word of man is expressed by his breath: the Word of God is revealed by His Spirit.

Is this merely a coincidence, or have we in it a mystery which is more a suggestion than an idea to us as yet? In all such thought, however, let the distinct and actual personality of God the Spirit be carefully guarded.

But of course the passage in our Lord's teaching which at once comes to mind, is that famous one in St. John iii, "The wind bloweth where it listeth." "If no one," says Chrysostom, "can control the wind, much less can any laws of nature constrain the Spirit; and if you cannot trace the path of the wind, whose effects, however, you hear and see, how can you expect to scrutinise the operations of the Holy Spirit of God?"

But the wind lulls, and sinks weary, and an impassive languor overspreads the hurry and frenzy of the landscape—for, on my way home, I have got among trees. My mind gets back to that analogy of

Divine suggestion, about which I would say only a few more words. Bishop Andrewes, in his notable sermon "Of the sending of the Holy Ghost," tells us why "the mind, which is the type of the Holy Ghost, of all the creatures doth best express it." "For first, of all bodily things it is the least bodily, and cometh nearer to the nature of a spirit, invisible as it is. And secondly, quick and active as the Spirit is." And then he takes some properties of the Pentecostal wind, of which one is that it fell suddenly. "So doth the wind. It riseth oftentimes in the midst of a calm, giveth no warning, but rusheth up of a sudden; and even so doth the Spirit. For that 'cometh not by observation.' Therefore sudden, that men may learn not to despise present motions of grace, though suddenly rising in them, and though they can give no certain reason of them, but take the wind while it bloweth, and the water while the angel moveth it, as not knowing when it will, or whether ever it will blow again, or stir any more." Alford beautifully describes such a wind: "The wind breatheth where it listeth." "It is one of those sudden breezes springing up on a calm day, which has no apparent direction; but we hear it rustling in the leaves around." And I cannot refrain from quoting from "In Memoriam" a consummate description of such a wind. It will come like an exquisite picture to enliven letterpress that some of my readers may begin to think rather over-grave:—

"By night we lingered on the lawn,
For under foot the herb was dry;
And genial warmth; and o'er the sky
The silvery haze of summer drawn;

"And calm that let the tapers burn
Unwavering: not a cricket chirred;
The brook alone far off was heard,
And on the board the fluttering urn.

"And bats went round in fragrant skies,
And wheeled or lit the filmy shapes
That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes
And woolly breasts, and beaded eyes."

The poet, alone with his tender and mournful memories, lingered yet on the summer lawn, and watched out the short night, staying behind—

"When those others, one by one,
Withdrew themselves from me and night,
And in the house light after light
Went out, and I was left alone."

And so he watched and mused out the night, contemplating those immense revelations which are made when the sun withdraws his obscuring light, until indeed the time drew near when the veil of Light was again to be drawn over Infinity:—

"Till now the doubtful dusk revealed
The knolls once more, where, couched at ease,
The white kine glimmered, and the trees
Laid their dark arms about the field.

"And sucked from out the distant gloom,
A breeze begun to tremble o'er
The large leaves of the sycamore,
And fluctuate all the still perfume.

"And gathering freshlier overhead,
Rocked the full-foliaged elms, and swung
The heavy-folded rose, and flung
The lilies to and fro, and said—

"The dawn, the dawn!" and died away;
And East and West, without a breath,
Mixt their dim lights, like life and death,
To broaden into boundless day."

But the term of my walk is reached: here is the gateway, with the chesnuts and the watching eagles. So I must e'en break off, and let those who list seek in the quarry which I was working, the further analogies of that wind—its seeming thinness, but its might and vehemence; its coming from heaven, and not from caves of earth; its filling one place and no more, where the Apostles were sitting. Stop; while I stand on the doorstep, I may just recall the striking comment upon this characteristic: *Ubi vult spirat.* "To blow in certain places where itself will, and upon certain persons, and they shall plainly feel it, and others about them not a whit. There shall be an hundred or more in an auditory; one sound is heard, one breath doth blow. At that instant one or two and no more; one here, another there; they shall feel the Spirit, shall be affected and touched with it sensibly; twenty on this side them, and forty on that, shall not feel it, but sit all becalmed, and go their way no more moved than they came. *Ubi vult spirat,* is most true."

I must ring again. I cannot have been heard. How differently the world-worn Solomon considered of the wind; how he was wearied with it and depressed by it, as indeed with everything else under the sun:—"The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually."

But here is the door opened, and I may not stand musing any more.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

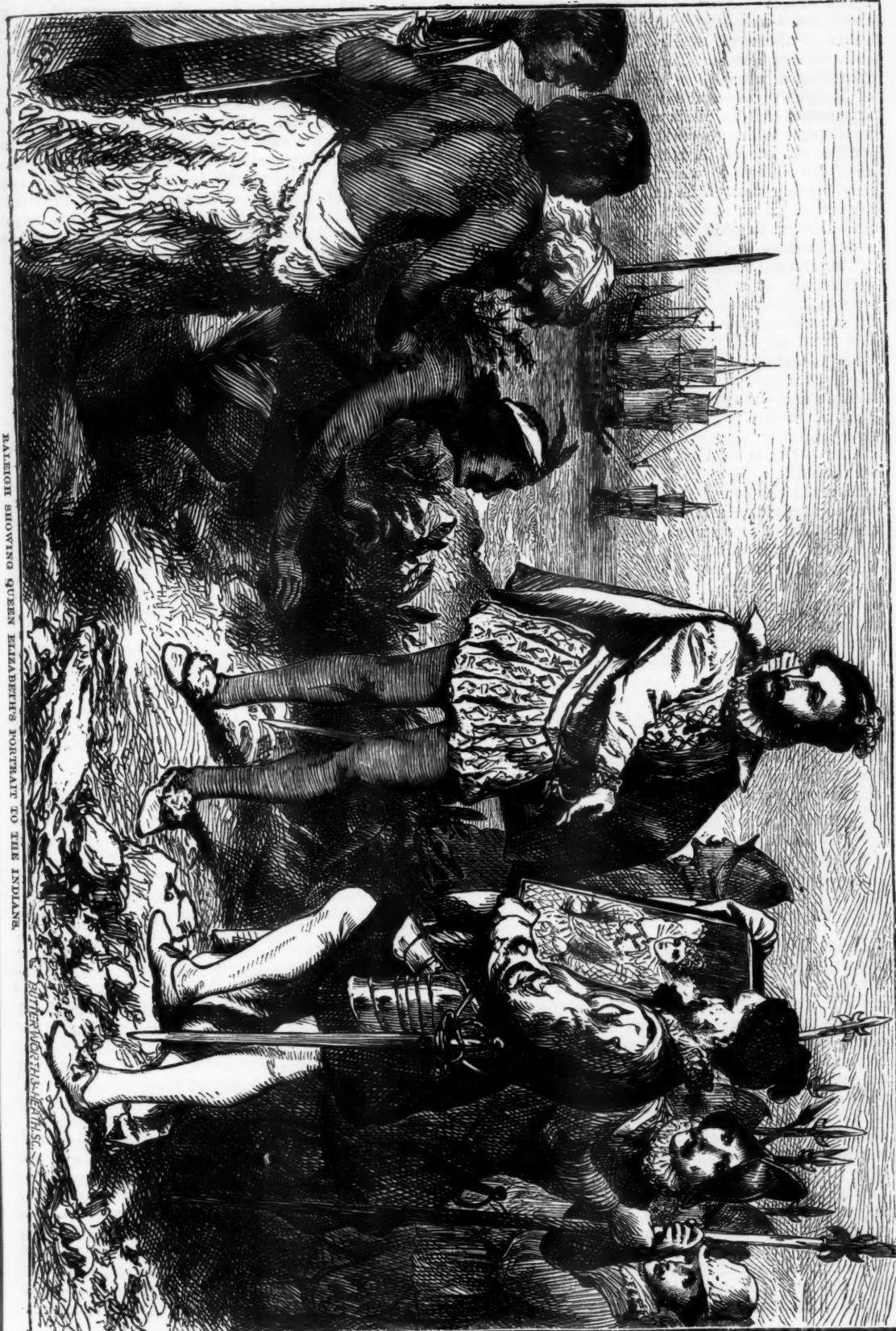
THERE is a romance about the life of Sir Walter Raleigh which fascinates the writers as well as the readers of history. In the Elizabethan age of great men, his figure is conspicuous alike in arts and in arms. Of whom, as of him, could the line be used—

"The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's eye, tongue, sword"!

In days of heroes like Sir Humphrey Gilbert, of knights like Sir Philip Sidney, of sailors like Sir Francis Drake, of poets like Edmund Spenser, and of politicians like Robert Cecil, the name of Raleigh shines as of the first magnitude. "The more we meditate over his career," says a recent writer, "the more we wonder at the marvellous many-sidedness of the man. In this respect he far excelled his peers, Shakespeare and Bacon. A most sweet and tuneful poet, a profound and philosophic historian, an accomplished courtier, a skilful navigator and ship-builder, a gallant warrior both by sea and land, an ardent planter, horticulturist, and botanist, an earnest student of chemistry, and, lastly, to omit many other of his distinctions, a bold preacher of free-trade doctrines in the House of Commons nearly 300 years before such doctrines were ordinarily accepted—truly this was a marvel of a man."

In the "Leisure Hour" for July, 1864, we gave a biographical memoir of Raleigh, to which we refer our readers. We are led to return to the subject now, from the appearance of another addition to the long list of biographies,* from the "Times" review of

* "The Life and Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh." Two vols. By E. Edwards. (Macmillan & Co.)



RALEIGH SHOWING QUEEN ELIZABETH'S PORTRAIT TO THE INDIANS.

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which we have borrowed the foregoing remark about the "many-sidedness" of the man. The special value of the work of Mr. Edwards is the copious collection of letters. The life itself is a cumbrous narrative, in which some of the most famous passages of Raleigh's career are too briefly told, and long arguments and disquisitions made on points of minor importance to the general reader, if not to the critical student of history. A true biographer ought to write as if for readers to whom his story is all fresh and new, leaving discussions and criticism to footnotes or appendix. Even in the columns of a critical reviewer it is pleasant to glide into a paragraph in old familiar strain of story.

The events of Raleigh's career are probably more interesting, at any rate to young and adventurous persons, than those of any other notable Englishman. No other man's life affords such a diversified story. We first see him as the diligent student of Oriel College, Oxford; then, before he is out of his boyhood, as a volunteer on the Huguenot side in the terrible civil contentions which at that time desolated France; then aiding to suppress an Irish rebellion; then fighting against the Spaniard in the Low Countries; then at the Court of the Virgin Queen, who loved to see goodly proper men around her, and who made the young Devonian, whose conversation was so fascinating and whose face was so handsome, the captain of her guard, besides loading him with other and more substantial favours. Later, we see Raleigh in the character of coloniser, the true founder of the mighty English-speaking power which now occupies greater part of the North American continent, though not a man of his various expeditions survived to people the fertile lands of Virginia; we also see him as an enthusiastic seeker after El Dorado, making a boat voyage up the River Orinoco, in search of that wonderful city whose palaces are built of massy gold, and which stands on the shore of a lake whose waters glitter so brilliantly that their reflection is seen in "the Magellanis clouds" of the southern hemisphere. This is the region of which old Chapman sings:—

"Guiana, whose rich feet are mines of gold,
Whose forehead knocks against the roof of stars,
Stands on her tiptoe at fair England looking,
Kissing her hand, bowing her mighty breast,
And every sign of all submission making,
To be her sister."

Next, Raleigh appears as the gallant naval combatant, capturing the rich Spanish fleet in Cadiz harbour, and taking Fayal, the capital of the Azores. He is now at the height of his prosperity—Governor of Jersey, warden of the stannaries, patentee of wine licences, and an extensive planter both in Devonshire and Ireland. Then come the fall and execution of Essex and the death of the Queen. In spite of her feminine jealousy at his secret marriage with pretty Mistress Throgmorton, she had been a kind friend to Raleigh, and he soon had reason to rue her departure. The gallant, impious woman was succeeded by a mean-spirited, cowardly man. James had been taught to beware of Raleigh, and he soon learnt to hate him. Almost before the king was fairly seated on the throne a conspiracy was organised against him. The plot was detected, and it was whispered that Raleigh was implicated in it. The evidence against him was of the most trivial character, consisting of hearsay stories and of

the alleged confession of another prisoner, who lied and retracted, and then lied and retracted again. No more disgraceful trial has occurred in English annals; but Attorney-General Coke, who behaved like a brute on this occasion, had everything his own way. The prisoners were found guilty, and were sentenced to death. After a while they were respite, and Raleigh was sent to the Tower, where he spent twelve laborious years making chemical experiments and writing his immortal book. Then he was released conditionally, in order that he might find the famous Guiana gold-mine. The voyage was most disastrous. Raleigh did not find El Dorado, and he fell into conflict with the Spaniards. We were then at peace with Spain, and the shedding of Spanish blood, even in self-defence, was an especially heinous offence at that time in James's eyes, because he was arranging a match between his son Charles and the Infanta of Spain, with whom he hoped to get half a million of money. Moreover, ill success is always inexcusable. Poor old Raleigh came back, laden with anxiety andague fits instead of golden ingots. The Spanish ambassador exclaimed against him as a pirate of whom an example must be made, and accordingly he was executed under the original sentence of fifteen years before.

The perplexing question of Raleigh's innocence or guilt, on the question of treason, is not yet finally solved. That he disliked the Scottish holder of the throne of England, and had spoken contemptuously of him, is very likely. That he had envious and powerful enemies at Court, especially the Lord Treasurer Cecil, is very certain. That he had been not unwilling to accept money, after the manner of that time, for political services, is very probable. That he had listened to treasonable talk of disaffected Englishmen is very possible. But that he was a traitor or disloyal in the plain sense of the words, that he deserved to die as an enemy to his king and his country, no English patriot believes. He was proud in spirit, and haughty in manners, and therefore unpopular with the mob, whether of the Court or of the streets. But amidst the Devonshire and Cornish miners, and his own companions in his voyages, he was a favourite, and by the Indians he was revered and long remembered.

The accompanying picture refers to a scene in Sir Walter's own "Account of the discovery of the large, rich, and beautiful empire of Guiana, with a relation of the great and golden city of Manoa (which the Spaniards call El Dorado), performed in the year 1595. By Sir Walter Raleigh, Knt. (Printed for the Hakluyt Society.)"

"We then hastened away towards our purposed discovery, and first I called all the capitaines of the island together that were enemies to the Spaniards, for there were some which Berreo had brought out of other countries, and planted there to eat out and erase those that were natural of the place, and by my Indian interpreter, which I carried out of England, I made them understand that I was the servant of a Queen, who was the great Casique of the North, and a virgin, and had more Casiqui under her than there were trees in their island: that she was an enemy to the Castellani (Castilians), in respect of their tyranny and oppression, and that she delivered all such nations about her, as were by them oppressed, and having freed all the coast of the northern world from their servitude had sent me to free them also, and withal to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and con-

quest. *I shewed them her maiesties picture which they no admired and honoured, as it had beene easie to have brought them idolatrous thereof.*

"The like and a more large discourse I made to the rest of the nations, both in my passing to Guiana and to those of the borders, so as in that part of the world her majesty is very famous and admirable, whom they now call Ezrabetta Cassipuna Aquerewana, which is as much as Elizabeth, the great princesse or greatest commander. This done wee left Puerto de los Hispanioles, and returned to Curiapan, and having Berreo my prisoner, I gathered from him as much of Guiana as he knew."

NATURAL HISTORY ANECDOTES.

LAST summer a friend of mine had a hen which, after laying about ten or a dozen eggs, always wanted to sit. Its owner wished for eggs and not for chickens, and therefore prevented her sitting, by taking away her eggs as she laid. Still she persevered, and long after my friend knew she had ceased to lay, he continually found her sitting upon eggs, sometimes two or sometimes three. These were taken away, and still the next day the same result occurred. At the same time it appeared that the other hens had ceased to lay.

The owner resolved, if possible, to solve the mystery. Accordingly, he hid himself in an outhouse, having holes in the door. Through these he watched, and saw the hen which wanted to sit, come down from her nest by the ladder (the nest being four feet from the ground). She then walked about, till one of the other hens came cackling off her nest. Cautiously she approached, and presently emerged with her head tucked down over her breast. She then slowly and with most careful steps mounted the ladder leading to her nest. After the lapse of a few minutes, another hen came off her nest, making a joyful noise at having deposited an egg. Directly this cackling was heard, the sitting hen looked out from her own nest, descended as before, went quietly into the nest of the one which had just emerged from it, and soon reappeared with her head again tucked under her breast, and so ascended to her own abode.

My friend's curiosity now gained the mastery over his patience. On emerging from his hiding-place, he went straight to the nest of the sitting hen, and there discovered that she had purloined two eggs from the hens which had laid, as none were found in their laying boxes. She had actually rolled them up under her neck on her breast, and mounted the ladder with them in this position, and deposited them safely in her nest.

I think the very strong maternal instinct showed by this hen should have been rewarded by allowing her to hatch some of these eggs, but I regret to add that my friend thought otherwise, and killed her.

Another of his hens had also a peculiarity in her manner of laying. She would never lay in the hen-house with the other fowls, neither would she lay in any nest made for her, though several were attempted, her favourite place being a flat garden table. Upon this strange nest she would deposit an egg every other day, which invariably rolled off and was broken in pieces. My friend tried all kinds of devices by which to save his eggs, but all failed: she would lay on the table and nowhere else, not even in a box, basket, or nest, which were successively placed on the table to

entice her to abandon the habit she had formed. A ledge nailed round the edge of the table might have saved the eggs, but this was not at the time suggested.

A very interesting anecdote showing the strong maternal instinct which exists among animals was told me while reading the "Leisure Hour" to a friend. It occurred in his mother's family. She was a very aged lady, and imbecile; her constant attendant was a little spaniel dog, named "Flo," who was so sagacious that when anything out of the common way occurred—if, for instance, the old lady was more restless than usual—she would run and bark and drag some one to the spot. In course of time "Flo" brought forth a litter; the puppies were all drowned, and the mother was disconsolate. Now about the same time a cat kittened in a barn some hundreds of yards from the house. Forthwith "Flo" proceeded to the barn (though how she could tell that there were kittens remains a mystery), and carried off first one kitten and then another, until she had deposited the whole four in her basket. She then was highly delighted, and contentedly suckled them.

A few hours after this transaction she was called upon to accompany her mistress a walk; during her absence the cat came into the house and carried back to the barn her four kittens. When "Flo" returned she immediately went to her basket, and, finding it empty, paused, as if in thought for a moment, and then made off for the barn as fast as possible. Here we may expect a struggle took place, but "Flo" came off victorious, for she, in her repeated journeys, brought back all the kittens. The cat mother did not rest content under her bereavement. She frequently tried to gain possession of her lawful offspring, but her efforts were unsuccessful, and the dog remained the protector and sustainer of her adopted brood. Many visitors were shown this curiously assorted family, as the circumstance spread far and wide. I may mention that one of the most curious traits in the affair was the way in which the dog corrected her kittens when they mewed. If they made a noise, she rushed to the basket and barked furiously at them, when, either by threat or fright, she immediately reduced them to silence.

Cats have great curiosity. I do not know if your readers have observed that a new piece of furniture is never placed in a room, but the cat, as soon as she enters, will not rest satisfied until she has thoroughly inspected the article, as Cowper describes his tame hares to have done when there was a darn or patch in the carpet. I was much struck the other day by a cat scratching against the door, and rearing herself upon her hind legs, in order to examine a new lock which she had attentively watched being repaired by the locksmith.

We often have heard that a cat has nine lives. Just to show the vitality which exists in them even when quite young, I may mention that a cat belonging to a friend of mine living at a large farmhouse, had kittens, which were first drowned, and then thrown out upon the dunghill as dead. To the surprise of the farmer the next day, there before the kitchen fire lay the cat nursing her kittens. It seems that life could not have been quite extinct when they had been cast out, and that the warmth of the manure heap had revived them. This same cat, which was given to the farmer when quite grown up, continued to have kittens for a period of eighteen years, even

when she could hardly see or smell, for its owner saw a mouse run slowly close by the basket in which she was lying, but she remained perfectly unmoved. This cat was wonderfully fleet in catching birds. She used to lie in an empty hen-coop close to the spot where the fowls were fed, and when the sparrows descended to feed, pounce upon them, and in this way destroy great numbers. The son of the farmer had a large number of goldfinches, which he kept in an antiquely furnished parlour, the window reaching higher than the ceiling, going up in fact to the room above. Here the goldfinches loved to live and thrive, still one by one they disappeared. After a time the mystery was explained. It appears that when the family left the room after breakfast, the birds used to fly to the table, and pick up the crumbs; now the cat found that, by going into the room above, she could descend by the window, and making a spring, snatch one or two of the goldfinches. She never left a feather behind to tell the tale of her depredations, and it was only after some time that her manner of proceeding was discovered.

A tradesman living in London gave me the following anecdote. He had a very handsome cat; after a time it disappeared, and he gave it over as lost. About three weeks afterwards, a porter at a workshop a few doors off said to him, "Do you want a cat? There has been one on our loft for some time, and I know it has had nothing but rain water all the while." Accordingly, the animal, a mass of skin and bone, was brought over to the house of the tradesman, who, upon seeing it, immediately recognised it as his lost cat. This the other disputed. "Oh!" said the tradesman, "I will soon show you that it is my cat. Put it down: if it runs up-stairs it is a strange cat (cats always run upwards in strange houses); if it is mine she will soon make herself at home." The cat was placed on the floor, and after smelling the shop furniture, slowly walked *down-stairs*, and after stretching herself lay down contentedly before the kitchen fire. "There," said its master, "I hope you are satisfied."

This same tradesman had once another cat, which was extremely fond of the servant. It would follow her everywhere, even to the shops in the busy neighbourhood. It generally stationed itself outside the door of the room she was in, and waited to accompany her to the kitchen. This servant left to be married, and a fresh one came in her place. The cat smelt at her a good deal, walked round her several times, and then disappeared for a week. It then returned, went up to the servant, looked at her well several times during the day, and in the evening went off and never returned. It may be added that the character of the new servant was very inferior to the former one, and she had to be dismissed. Perhaps the cat perceived this difference in disposition. This very same cat always went into the country with its master and mistress on a visit to a friend. Whenever they went for a walk it would be sure to meet them on their return some way from the house, walking always inside the hedgerow, and occasionally putting its tail through the quickset hedge, in order to let them know that it was near at hand.

The owner of this cat also told me that it is not generally known that cats always sleep off whatever complaint or sickness they have, and the only medicine they naturally take is grass, though one of the cats he possessed would also eat Whatman's paper whenever he could get it. Singular to say, he would

eat none else: perhaps this arises from the fact that Whatman's (the father's) paper was made of the best Russian rags.

I must add a few more anecdotes about parrots.

During the social science meeting last year at Norwich, many of the visitors went to see the residence of the Dowager Lady Buxton near that city, and among the many interesting objects shown them, none pleased them more than the collection of parrots which flew about unmolested and perfectly free. In one of the trees, a hollow one, a cat had kittened, and one of the parrots, instead of resenting the intrusion, actually assisted the cat to nurse her kittens by covering them over with her outspread wings, whenever the cat went out in search of food.

One parrot I know well has, on the other hand, a great antipathy to cats. In her dislike she was supported by a small terrier dog; whenever a cat appeared in the garden the parrot would whistle and call "Prim, Prim;" instantly the dog knew what was wanted, and rushed forward. "Cat, cat," screamed the parrot. Away went the dog to charge the common enemy. When she was driven away, "Hip, hip, hurrah!" several times repeated, would the parrot cry; and the friends would seemingly greatly rejoice at the issue of the fight.

It is said that parrots are extremely jealous of other pets, especially of cats, lap-dogs, and canaries, and many instances of their revengeful nature are to be found in natural history. But one parrot I possessed showed a contrary disposition. Instead of being jealous of a canary which hung in a cage near by, it would imitate its singing, encourage it to prolong its song, and give expressions of approval at its close. It was fond also of undoing the fastening of its own cage; then, getting out, it would invariably go to the canary's cage, open the door of the cage, enter, gently drive out the owner, who in turn flew to the parrot's cage, and entered it, and when this change was effected both birds would sing with delight at the success of their friendly exchange. This proceeding took place several times in the week, without the slightest spite or ill-will being shown by the parrot. This bird was a capital talker, especially clever in imitating children, particularly in crying and sobbing, and it is a fact that we actually discovered from what the parrot used to tell us that the nurse was accustomed to beat and otherwise ill-treat my little brother in the absence of the rest of the family. It was a painful discovery, but it led to the evil being remedied, for there was afterwards found to be abundance of corroborative evidence. This bird was a great enemy to the cat, and incessantly teased it by mewing and calling. Unfortunately the ceiling of the room in which the parrot was kept was whitewashed afresh, and the smell so affected the bird that it never recovered.

Memory is strong in the parrot tribe. A friend of the writer had a small parakeet, which showed it in a remarkable way. One of the sons of the family was very fond of unbuttoning his double-breasted waistcoat, and nestling the parrot inside, as it liked the warmth. This youth went to sea for three years, and then returned home. Amid the congratulations on the stairs, the parrot made its appearance, and, climbing up his clothes, nestled inside his waistcoat, as it was wont to do three years before.

A bird-dealer in St. Giles had a grey parrot which talked uncommonly well, but possessed one habit which prevented its sale; some person had taught

it to apply the most opprobrious epithets to any lady who approached its cage. Its conduct was so bad in this respect, and its voice so clear and intonation so perfect, it was found necessary to cover its cage with a thick sack to prevent it seeing the female customers enter the shop. One day a lady accompanied by her two daughters came to buy a canary, and while the dealer was serving the young ladies, their mother seated herself by the concealed parrot. From a hole he had contrived to pick in the sack, Poll spied her, and instantly saluted her with his usual insulting remarks. The lady started up in astonishment, but instead of rushing from the shop as the bird-dealer expected, in anger, she actually called her daughters to the cage to hear the parrot address her. This bird was afterwards bought by a young naval officer, who hastily drove up in a cab, stating he was in a great hurry to catch a train. Had the dealer a grey parrot he could warrant to talk well? He replied he had one bird; and a few sentences from Polly enchanted the customer. Putting him into a new cage, the dealer received fifteen pounds for the bird. Just as the cab door was closed, and the horse starting, the gentleman put his head out of the window and told the dealer he had bought the parrot as a present for his young lady. The seller went to the shop of a neighbour, who immensely enjoyed the joke, wondering how the young lady would like the first salutation the parrot would be certain to give her. I may add, the purchaser never made his reappearance, and the consequences of the gift are unknown to me, and whether Poll helped or hindered the young sailor's suit.

FROM NUBIA DOWN THE NILE.

BY HOWARD HOPELY.

CHAPTER V.—IBREEM.

"From thence, far off, he unto him did shew
A little path, that was both steep and long,
Which to a goodly city led his view:
Whose walls and towres were builded high and strong
Of perle and pretious stones, that earthly tong
Cannot describe."

AWAY some twenty miles north of Ipsambul, rising sheer up from the water, is a huge beetling cliff, rampart-crested, that frowns menacingly over the stream. The deserted Arab city of Ibrem is edged on its summit. The prefix Arab, though, will hardly apply, for Ibrem has changed its nationality so often. The city was taken, so Strabo says, from Queen Candace, ancestress of our late enemy Theodore. The Romans succeeded her ebon Majesty in possession of it, and then, later, until Saladin's time, its dizzy ledges and their crowning fortress were peopled with a flourishing colony of Christians.

Christians! always and everywhere in these regions you come upon the footfalls of those old Christians. Alas! the race is almost extinct now. Whence shall the mission come to revive the dead churches of Egypt?

We tethered our dahabeeyah one morning to the western bank, and rowed in the felucca across the river to "attack," as the Alpine Club would say, this dizzy rock citadel. We toiled up by crag and stair, and found a ledge half way, by which, taking a circuit, we were able to climb to the ruined wall. Passing under a gateway of Roman fashioning we entered a silent city. Jackals hid there, and scorpions

lay brooding among its ruins. The quick-eyed lizard basking in the sun glanced inquiringly at us as we trod Ibrem's voiceless streets. On either hand half-fallen houses disclosed their ghastly wealth of tenantless chambers, and in the lone market-places, which aforetime had echoed to the joyous babble of children piping and playing, we stumbled over the *débris* of a half-fallen mosque. We found an eligible place in the crumbling courts of this sanctuary to rest in. There we laid out our luncheon. A strange meal it was in that lone ghostly place. The fretted Kebla pointing to Mecca was laid bare to our view, and its sculptured work glittered in the sun. While high above from the gallery of a minaret, now silent for ever from the muezzin's call to prayer, a solitary eagle looked down. He was sulkily watching us, fretful and vaporous at our intrusion.

After a time he swooped down for a morsel of meat we threw him. And then he looked sideways at us and hopped two or three steps nearer, thinking, probably, that we were not such bad fellows after all. By-and-by we climbed a tower on the ramparts that looked sheer over the river—a fearful fall.

The sun was sinking over the desert. Every distant peak and pinnacle lay bathed in the glory of his setting. Like the dolphin, he was dying in hues of purple and gold. But in this lonely region none of the faint musical noises of nightfall broke the spell-like silence. We espied two Nubians on the further shore across the breadth of river. They were talking; and in the great hush their voices came up to us quite distinctly on the tower. For a moment we watched flights of soft rosy clouds hastening over the fields of heaven to those fiery vortexes in the west, whither the sun was fast going down, far away in Lybia: vortexes of amber mists that deepened to the horizon in blood red. To the old Egyptian the fabled gates of Amenti were there. Those bars of light led into the fields that never fade, the land of peace—Amenti, whither Osiris had gone—the abode of unending felicity.

As twilight is treacherous in the tropics, we hurried down the scarped zigzags of the rock, and soon gained our boat. So soon that, while our felucca glided over the dusky waters, the lingering afterglow still bore us company, and burnt like a zone of fire upon the higher ledges of rock along our passage; while here and there crimson flashes stole through gaps in the western range, and painted tracks of light on the opposite cliff. Ibrem was lost in light, and its ramparts on their crag-pinnacle seemed transfigured into the semblance of some fairy city. We were enthusiastic at its beauty. Even Said, who was with us, clapped his hands approvingly, and then affably volunteered (in broken English) to tell us a tale.

Said had grown too familiar of late. We had spoilt the boy. We had not checked that easy impertinence of his which seemed natural to him, nor adequately punished him when, with unwonted inquisitiveness, he took to prying into the mysteries of our outlandish dress. Having the run of our cabins, it was his delight to rummage out a pair of trousers, a coat, or some other garment, and make the whole ship's company reel with laughing at his ludicrous attempts to put them on. But now, while Abdallah's measured strokes carried us homeward across the lonely river in the deepening dusk—the faint evening smell of water warning us to wrap up tightly from the chill—Said edged close to the Professor and told his tale. It

was this—a common tradition, in fact, in Egypt (and of some antiquity too, for I believe it is to be found in *d'Herbilot*, though I am utterly unable to suggest any meaning to it), about such eyries as Ib'reem: deserted cities nested on high pinnacles of rock:—

As the sun goes down a host of Djinns enter these desolate fortresses, and change tenement and wall into precious stones (hence their dazzling look at nightfall). Tall phantom-like shapes, white-clad, with long grey beards and piercing eyes, walk slowly through the streets, two and two. Each of these venerable beings carries a golden lance, and nods his head right and left like a Chinese idol. A dog, a bird, and a beetle follow each pair. When the perambulation terminates, a raven comes and croaks, “*You may sit down.*” The old men then seat themselves, and their followers—dogs, etc.—do the same. Next a vulture swoops down, and screams out, “*You may talk.*” Then the phantoms hold high conclave—solemn, gestureless. The dogs all set up a howl, the beetles hum. At cock-crow a stork comes, and, standing on one leg in the midst of the assembly, begins to utter the Mussulman creed, *Alla il alla, etc.*; upon which all vanish, and the city comes back to its usual dulness of rock.

“Well done, Said,” cried the Professor, when the boy had finished his tale. “But what do they eat up there? You shall go some night and see; and then you can bring us down some diamonds, you know.”

Said could not tell what they ate, and he was rather taken aback about the proposition. “If I go up there they would kill me,” he pleaded; “and I think, if you please, I would rather stay with you:” and with that he bent over the boat and dabbled his hand in the ripples.

That evening, in looking over the stores, we came upon an extra case of wine. In our thoughtless kindness we gave some to the sailors, at which they were in high glee—made a night of it, in fact, telling stories and singing songs. They even established a watch-fire in an empty kettle on deck, for it was cold, and sat round it till a very late hour.

Next morning, old Hadji, like an honest Mussulman, began taking the crew to task for their last night's carouse. Had they not partaken of wine, a beverage accursed of the prophet? How then could they, thus disobedient, expect a prosperous voyage? And not wine only, but *araké* Hadji had detected them in swallowing! Alas for their faith! Wallah: must he, the holy man, be always made to eat dirt before the unbelievers! And then the indignant prophet turned his eye reproachfully upon us, as though we had done him a personal injury. But indeed in the matter of *araké* we were innocent, as we good-humouredly assured our steersman. And how the crew became possessed of it was a mystery, unless they had smuggled it at Syene; for *araké* is a strong spirit more accursed than wine, and only obtainable at secret depôts *sub rosâ*. The dirt, however, was eaten: that was Hadji's grief. He sat there on the sunny deck, leaning against the tiller, apparently industrious in mending some old clothes. But he was rebellious and simmering inwardly. He delivered his mind freely to such of the sailors as came near—a bit of it at a time, intermittently, firing it off at them like minute guns. Hadji had a grey grisly beard, and a sharp glittering eye, that earned him the nickname of Ancient Mariner. He was always prophesying, but I fear that, Cassandra-like, he prophesied in vain. Our Arabs would go and pat

him on the back coaxingly, and call him a good fellow, and drink their glass of wine (when they could get it) to his better health and temper. If Hadji had not been so ostentatious with his piety one might have respected him more. But first and foremost he was a Hadji. That fact he never neglected to insist on. He had been twice to Mecca and kissed the Black Stone in the Kaaba—a labour of most distinguished piety. Of what his career had been prior to that act of faith he was silent. Most men have a page in their lives that is doubled down. Hadji was not exempted from this common weakness, and he had a perfect right to shut the book up there. He had also, for the matter of that, a right to be poor. But then he gloried in it so, and exalted himself above his well-dressed neighbours with such an overweening and high-flown air that you became resentful at it. It seemed to put you out of conceit of being cleanly, and of wearing untorn garments. He would parade his rags before you as assiduously as Mammon-worshippers will parade their wealth. And, just as it is said there are ladies who place their most distinguished visitors' cards at the top of the heap, so Hadji would ostentatiously arrange his rags on the upper stratum of clothes in the little box that always stood by him at the tiller, and which contained, as he said, all his worldly effects. In fine, he was never tired of letting you know how religious he was, and how poor. And probably his industry that morning in stitching away at a pair of old drawers arose from the desire to show you how much they were ravaged and worn. In truth it was a wonderful article of clothing, that pair of drawers. We took it from him to examine, and tried to calm him down with our manifest admiration at his industry. The garment was constructed, not of many colours, but of a multitude of pieces—a marvel of patchwork.

Hadji, however, was fated to come to grief that morning. For the boat, in floating down the current, ran on to a perfidious sandbank, and stuck thereon. The sailors, of course, turned upon their prophet with a rebuke for his bad steering. Poor Hadji! his feelings were wounded in every way. And before the infidel too! As usual, in difficulties with sandbanks, the men cast off their garments and jumped overboard. Abdallah, Halil, Selim, and all the pack, were up to their breasts in water in a trice, pushing with their brawny shoulders at the bows. It was a funny operation, a combined effort, to the measure of a litany intoned by our Reis, who stood on the bulwarks. “*Haylee: El, e, sa*” (a grunt and a push), “*Ya M'hhammad: El, e, sa*” (a grunt and a push), etc.

Getting the dahabeeyah off a shoal was frequently the work of several hours. So now we took advantage of the mishap to have ourselves rowed ashore. We carried lunch with us, and directed the captain to wait for us some six or eight miles lower down stream. We would signal for the felucca at sunset by firing three shots from the bank.

DURING THE ECLIPSE.

ASTRONOMERS are well satisfied with the observations of the total eclipse of August, 1868. The composition of the rose-coloured protuberances seems to have been the point to which the attention of men of science was specially directed. In our January Part (p. 32),

will be found a summary of these observations, and of the subsequent experiments in analysing the spectrum of the solar atmosphere. There is no need now to wait for an eclipse for studying the composition of these hitherto mysterious prominences. The spectroscope can be made at any time to exhibit the special structure of the gaseous atmosphere of the sun, as distinguished from the analysis of ordinary solar light.

But leaving these high discoveries of science, we find much interest in the record of terrestrial effects of a total eclipse. In our volume for 1860, one of the members of the astronomical expedition to Spain gave a graphic account of the phenomena there observed during the eclipse of July 18 of that year. A similar report has been made by observers in various regions in 1868. The following is from Mr. J. Pope Hennessy, Governor of Labuan, who was assisted by Captain Reed and the officers of H.M. surveying ship *Rifleman*:

"The day was bright and clear—not a cloud near the sun. A few round white clouds that lay on the horizon hardly moved. There was a slight breeze from W.S.W. The sea was breaking heavily on the shore, and it had a slight brownish, blueish tinge all over, except where the white breakers approached the land. The grove of casuarina trees behind us had the same deep green colour which they always exhibit on a fine day in the tropics. A few swallows were skimming about high in the air. We also noticed some dragon-flies, butterflies, and a good many specimens of a large heavy fly like a drone bee. When we left the ship at ten o'clock the barometer was 30°.0; the mean of two thermometers in the shade was 85 deg.; the dry thermometer exposed to the sun was 61 deg.; and the wet thermometer exposed to the sun was 83.5 deg. During the progress of the eclipse the barometer fell steadily from 29.96 to 29.91 deg. The mean of the two thermometers in the shade was 85 deg., without any change whatever, from ten o'clock till the close of the eclipse. At the close of the eclipse 2h. 48m. 31.7s. it rose to 86 deg. The dry bulb thermometer, hung in the sunlight, fell from 96 deg. to 85 deg. as the moon was covering the sun, and rose from 85 deg. to 96 deg. as the sun was reappearing. The wet bulb thermometer fell from 83.5 to 83 at the total eclipse, and rose to 89 at the termination of the whole eclipse. Ten minutes before the total eclipse there seemed to be a luminous crescent reflected upon the dark body of the moon. In another minute a long beam of light, pale and quite straight, the rays diverging at a small angle, shot out from the westerly corner of the sun's crescent. At the same time Mr. Ellis noticed a corresponding dark band, or shadow, shooting down from the east corner of the crescent. At this time the sea assumed a darker aspect, and a well-defined green band was seen distinctly around the horizon. The temperature had fallen, and the wind had slightly freshened. The darkness then came on with great rapidity. The sensation was as if a thunder-storm was about to break, and one was startled on looking up to see not a single cloud overhead. The birds after flying very low disappeared altogether. The dragon-flies and butterflies disappeared, and the large dronelike flies all collected on the ceiling of the tent, and remained at rest. The crickets and cicadas in the jungle began to sound, and some birds, not visible, also began to twitter in the jungle. The sea

grew darker, and immediately before the total obscuration the horizon could not be seen. The line of round white clouds that lay near the horizon changed their colour and aspect with great rapidity. As the obscuration occurred, they all became of a dark purple, heavy looking, and with sharply defined edges. They then presented the appearance of clouds close to the horizon after sunset. It seemed as if a sun had set at the four points of the horizon. The sky was of a dark leaden blue, and the trees looked almost black. The faces of the observers looked dark, but not pallid or unnatural. The moment of maximum darkness seemed to be immediately before the total obscuration. For a few seconds nothing could be seen except objects quite close to the horizon. Suddenly there burst forth a luminous ring around the moon. This ring was composed of a multitude of rays quite irregular in length and in direction. From the upper and lower parts they extended in bands to a distance more than twice the diameter of the sun. Other bands appeared to fall to one side, but in this there was no regularity, for bands near them fell away apparently towards the other side. When I called attention to this, Lieutenant Ray said, 'Yes, I see them, they are like horses' tails,' and they certainly resembled masses of luminous hair in complete disorder. I have said that these bands appeared to fall to one side, but I do not mean that they actually fell, or moved in any way, during the observations. If the atmosphere had not been perfectly clear, it is possible that the appearance they presented would lead to the supposition that they moved, but no optical illusion of the kind was possible under the circumstances. During the second when the sun was disappearing, the edge of the luminous crescent became broken up into numerous points of light. The moment these were gone, the rays I have just mentioned shot forth, and, at the same time, we noticed the sudden appearance of the rose-coloured protuberances. The first of these was about one-sixth of the sun's diameter in length, and about one-twenty-fourth of the sun's diameter in breadth. It all appeared at the same instant, as if a veil had suddenly melted away from before it. It seemed to be a tower of rose-coloured clouds. The colour was most beautiful—more beautiful than any rose-colour I ever saw. Indeed, I know of no natural object or colour to which it can be with justice compared. Though one has to describe it as rose-coloured, yet in truth it was very different from any colour or tint I ever saw before."

After describing the appearance of the protuberances, Governor Hennessy thus concludes:—"Though the darkness was by no means so great as I had expected, I was unable to mark the protuberances in my note-book without the aid of a lantern, which the sailors lit when the eclipse became total. Those who were looking out for stars counted nine visible to the naked eye; one planet, Venus, was very brilliant. On board the *Rifleman* the fowls and pigeons went to roost, but the cattle showed no signs of uneasiness—they were lying down at the time."

Captain Reed adds some remarks:—"On the eclipse becoming total, a very bright rose-coloured protuberance shot out from the right upper quarter of the moon, and immediately afterwards another appeared on the opposite quarter—different in shape from the first. This last protuberance disappeared as the eclipse proceeded, and another showed itself on the

right lower quarter. From this, in a short time, numerous other patches of rose-coloured tints spread under the lower part of the moon, like intensely brilliant rose-coloured clouds just before the rising of the sun on a fine morning in the tropics, the sun itself very shortly afterwards reappearing. Neither immediately before the total obscuration nor immediately afterwards did I observe the edge of the luminous crescent of the sun broken up into numerous points of light (as seen by Governor Hennessey), nor did Navigating-Lieutenant Ellis; but Navigating-Lieutenant Ray observed that appearance, as the sun emerged from behind the dark body of the moon. I had, however, distinctly remarked during the progress of the eclipse that the dark limb of the moon did not present a perfectly regular outline, but a minutely broken and irregular one. The corona I should not describe as a ring, except in so far as concerned that portion of it immediately surrounding the moon's limb. From this edge it burst forth in sharp, irregular-shaped masses of exceedingly bright light, decreasing in brightness as the distance from the moon increased, and finally resolving into numberless bright rays, the visible extremes of which were distant from two to three diameters of the moon. The general appearance of the corona, as seen through my glass, struck me forcibly as resembling in form a Brunswick star; the bright light near the moon resembling the prominent portions immediately surrounding the centre, and the rays the more remote portions. I have heard the appearance described as representing the glory one sees around the heads of saints in old Italian pictures, and to my mind the general appearance could hardly be better described. The darkness was not nearly so intense as I expected to see it. I was greatly disappointed in this respect. On board the ship, Mr. Silk, the assistant-paymaster, read the telegraphic summary in the 'Home News' without difficulty, and the engineer in charge read aloud from the 'China Pilot.' The points, etc., of the compass could be readily discerned; but in the chart-room on deck, which has windows all round, the barometer could not be read without a light. Mr. Silk also observed that he could not see the corona through the smoked glass he was using during the totality, but could distinctly see the smallest speck of the sun when it reappeared. I should describe the effect of the darkness shortly after the eclipse had begun as closely resembling that produced by viewing a landscape on a bright sunny day through glasses of a slightly shaded neutral tint. As the eclipse proceeded the neutral tint shade increased in intensity until it reached its greatest depth. During the period of total eclipse, there was nothing whatever to produce in our minds the slightest feeling of horror which is said to have been felt by observers of other total eclipses—or anything approaching it. The impression the various phenomena made upon my mind was that of exceeding beauty and splendour, especially in respect to the brilliant and extraordinary rose-coloured horn projecting from the upper quarter of the dark surface of the moon, and the magnificent corona, which really seemed to afford us abundant light. We had been for some time exposed to the direct rays of an almost vertical sun in a cloudless sky, and the disappearance of that luminary produced, no doubt, on our minds very different feelings from what we should have experienced had we been viewing the phenomenon from a higher latitude."

Varieties.

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN 1868.—The record of title-pages for the past year shows that 4,581 new books and new editions have been published in Great Britain during 1868, exclusive of mere reissues and entries for alterations of price, and importation of foreign printed books. A classification of the titles comprising this total gives nearly one-fourth of the whole as upon theological subjects—viz., 984; to education, philology, and classical literature, 446; juvenile works, 524; novels, 408; law, 340; arts and sciences and fine-art books, 429; trade and commerce and political economy, 397; travel and geographical research, 238; history and biography, 273; poetry and the drama, 217; year-books and annual publications, 225; medicine and surgery, 193; and miscellaneous, 418. —*Publishers' Circular.*

THE LORD CHANCELLOR ON SABBATH OBSERVANCE.—At a meeting of the Westminster working-men's branch of the Lord's Day Observance Society, the Right Hon. Lord Hatherley (the Lord Chancellor) said all classes were interested in keeping the Sabbath as a holy day and day of rest. It was painful to every Christian man to walk through the streets of the metropolis on the Sunday, and to see how it was profaned and desecrated by all sorts of unnecessary work and trading being transacted. We had certainly not yet realised a continental Sunday in London, but unless some energetic steps were taken to stem the evil, that time might be not far distant. Looking at the question in a low point of view, it was the especial duty and interest of working men to discourage all attempts to interfere with the seventh day as a day of rest, for once let the Parisian system come into vogue in this country, under which the scaffolds of public buildings were as crowded with workmen on Sundays as on any other day, and they would have to work seven days for the pay they now receive for six. That might not be the immediate, but it would be the ultimate effect. He advocated a better observance of the Sabbath on higher and religious points. Those who laboured on the Lord's day ultimately took to making it what they called a day of recreation, but pursuing animal and sensual enjoyments, which too often degraded and brutalised them. He then proceeded to condemn all Sunday trading, the running of excursion trains, and various other modes by which Sunday was made a day of business and pleasure, and concluded by expressing his earnest desire that every man might have one day in seven in which to love and honour his God.

FUR TRADE.—In the "Leisure Hour" for February, 1866, an article by Mr. J. K. Lord gave a full account of the American fur trade. The following extract from an annual trade circular will interest many readers as showing the present demand for particular furs:—"At the annual sales in January, beaver advanced upon the corresponding sale of the previous year about twelve per cent.; the supply being 27,000 skins less. Musquash were 280,000 in excess; prices declined fifteen to twenty per cent. Opposum were in fair request at about previous rates. Fur seal were in good demand, realising higher prices. The spring fur sales in March went off in general with spirit, higher rates on an average being obtained for most descriptions, except fox, pale silvery, cross, and Hudson's Bay red. Lynx and musquash, brown, were in large supply, which rather lowered their averages. Raccoon and marten were short in quantity, and realised higher rates. At the autumn sales in September, the general demand was also good. Raccoon (again in short supply), beaver, otter, marten, mink, lynx, bear, fox red, musquash, and skunk sold freely, and average rates improved. Badger, fox, silver and cross, of pale and low quality, remained without improvement. Of fur seal, the number offered at public sale, 85,700, was larger than for many years; the demand was extensive, and higher prices were realised. In December, 3,750 skins sold at public sale; the market was less active, the quality and sizes were first-rate, consequently prices declined. Hair seal were in good request, and sold freely at about the average rates of the previous year. Of deer, the supplies from North America were, 12,000 from the United States, 6,850 from British Columbia, and 4,700 from Central America; the demand was good and full prices realised. Of chinchilla, real, only 34,000 were offered; prices were 40s. to 50s. per dozen higher. A much larger quantity of bastard, say 76,000, were offered, and sold about ten to fifteen per cent. lower than the previous year."

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